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Several Khasis claim that the devil prescribed to their ancestors the method of sacrificing. On the other hand others maintain that in times past a man of rare size and strength came to their country. This man accomplished wonderful things, and commanded their ancestors to sacrifice and at the same time prescribed for them the method of sacrificing. Today the place of his former dwelling on a mountain near Shillong is still pointed out. Since something divine was suspected in that man, he was called u 'lei shillong (the god Shillong).

[103]

776

The Khasi believe in a highest being, whom they call u blei nongthaw (1) (the creator god).

[194]

1. Pronunciation of Khasi (method of writing): ei is pronounced as two syllables, e - i, w is pronounced like u, aw is therefore like a - u, sh is pronounced like sch = phonetic ś.

Just as the ideas about this person are very hazy, so are the concepts of eternity and the soul.

• 775

The Khasi are not in agreement among themselves about the conception of what happens to the soul after death. Several say that after death the soul goes up in the air and becomes air and therefore exists no longer. But most of them believe that the soul exists after death and can be happy or unhappy. But this does not depend on personal guilt or sin but only on the conscientious completion of the burial ceremonies.

[631]

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The country in which the Khasi live is divided into several districts, which were formerly ruled by several kings before the English came. [408] According to the Khasi each district

SECTION IV.

RELIGION.

GENERAL CHARACTER OF POPULAR BELIEFS.

THE Khasis have a vague belief in a God the Creator, *U Blei* 776
Nong-thaw, although this deity, owing, no doubt, to the
influences of the matriarchate, is frequently given the attribute
of the feminine gender, cf., *Ka lei Synshar*. The Khasis
cannot, however, be said to worship the Supreme God, although
it is true that they sometimes invoke him when sacrificing and
in times of trouble. The religion of the Khasis may be 771
described as animism or spirit-worship, or rather, the pro- 782
pitiatio of spirits both good and evil on certain occasions, 791
principally in times of trouble. The propitiation of these 793
spirits is carried out either by priests (*lyngdohs*), or by old men
well versed in the arts of necromancy, and as the *lyngdoh* or wise
man deals with good as well as evil spirits, and, as often as not,
with the good spirits of ancestors, the propitiation of these
spirits may be said to partake of the nature of Shamanism. A 769
very prominent feature of the Khasi beliefs is the propitiation
of ancestors; but this will be described separately. There is a 775
vague belief amongst the Khasi of a future state. It is 276
believed that the spirits of the dead, whose funeral ceremonies 764
have been duly performed, go to the house or garden of God,
where there are groves of betel-nut trees; hence the ex-
pression for the departed, *uba bam kwai ha iing u blei* (he who is
eating betel-nut in God's house), the idea of supreme happiness
to the Khasi being to eat betel-nut uninterruptedly. The 775
spirits of those whose funeral ceremonies have not been duly 764
performed are believed to take the forms of animals, birds, or 825

- 775 insects, and to roam on this earth; but this idea of transmigration
 764 of souls has been probably borrowed from the Hindus. Bivar
 825 writes that although the ideas of a Godhead are not clearly
 [776] grasped, yet a supreme creator is acknowledged, and that the
 following is the tradition relating to the creation of man.
 "God in the beginning having created man, placed him on the
 773 earth, but on returning to look at him, found he had been
 destroyed by the evil spirit. This happened a second time,
 whereupon the Deity created first a dog, then a man; and the dog,
 who kept watch, prevented the devil from destroying the man,
 772 and the work of the Deity was thus preserved." The Khasis,
 783 apparently, do not believe in punishment after death, at least,
 775 there is no idea of hell, although the spirits of those who have
 died under the ban of *sang* remain uneasy, being obliged to
 wander about the earth in different forms, as noted above. The
 776 spirits worshipped by the Khasis are many in number, those of
 787 the Syntengs being specially numerous. The particular spirit
 782 to be propitiated is ascertained by egg-breaking. The offering
 acceptable to the spirit is similarly ascertained and is
 then made. If the particular sacrifice does not produce
 the result desired, a fowl is sacrificed; the entrails being
 then examined, an augury is drawn, and the sacrifice begins
 afresh. As the process of egg-breaking is believed to be
 peculiar * to the Khasis amongst the Assam hill tribes, a separate
 description of it is given in the Appendix. It should be
 [778] remarked that the Khasis never symbolize their gods by means
 of images, their worship being offered to the spirit only. The
 following are some of the principal spirits worshipped by the
 [769] Khasis and Syntengs, omitting the spirits of deceased
 ancestors such as *Ka Jawebi*, *u Thawlang*, and *u Suidnia*,
 which will be described under the heading of ancestor-worship.
- 776 *U'ei muluk*—the god of the State, who is propitiated yearly
 782 by the sacrifice of a goat and a cock.
- U'ei untong*—the god of water, used for drinking and
 cooking purposes. This god is similarly propitiated once a
 year, so that the water supply may remain pure.

* Sir Charles Lyall has pointed out that the Mikirs possess this custom; it is probably borrowed from the Khasis.

585 of a Garo marriage. The Lynngams, unlike the Garos, do not
782 observe which way the beaks of the fowls turn when they are
787 thrown on the ground after being sacrificed. The Lynngams,
like the Khasis, take auguries from the entrails of the fowls and
the pig. After these ceremonies are over, the Lynngam pair
are allowed to cohabit. The cost of an ordinary Lynngam
585 marriage is from Rs. 30 to Rs. 40. The marriage system in
435 vogue among the Lynngams may be described as a mixture
of the Khasi and Garo customs. As has already been stated,
161 the Lynngams are a mongrel breed of Khasis and Garos.

CEREMONIES ATTENDING DEATH.

764 The death customs of the Khasis are not only very elaborate,
but possess a significance of their own, it is, therefore, necessary
to describe them in detail; they are as follows:—

763 A member of the family bends down towards the ear
of the apparently deceased person and calls him or her by
name three times, to make sure that death has occurred.

964 If no answer comes, the family laments, for it is then con-
291 cluded that the person is really dead. The body is then bathed
in warm water from three earthen pots and is reverently
laid on a mat (*jopung*), where it is dressed in white cloth, a
peculiar feature of the dressing being that the waist-cloth and
turban are folded from left to right, and not from right to left,
as in the case of the living. An egg called *u'leng kpoh*

764 is placed on the stomach of the deceased, and nine fried grains,
of *rice hadem*, or Indian corn, are tied round the head with a
string. The rich place ear-rings in the ears and other jewellery
on the body of the deceased, it being necessary that this
jewellery should be specially made for the occasion, and they
[775] deck the corpse with valuable cloths. A cock, *u'iar krad lyati*
(literally the cock that scratches the way), is sacrificed, the idea
being that a cock will scratch a path for the spirit to the next
world. A sacrifice of a bull, or of a cow in case the deceased is
a woman, (*u* or *ka masi pynsum*), follows. Portions of the left
leg of the fowl and the lower part of the jaw of the bull or cow
are kept, to be placed afterwards in the *mawshieng*, or bone,

THE KHASIS

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765 If any stream has to be crossed, a rough bridge is made of
764 branches and grass. This trail of leaves and the bridges are
intended to guide the spirit of the deceased to the cairn. The
person who carries the bones is not allowed to turn round, or
to the right, or to the left, but must proceed straight to the
cairn. On reaching it, a *nongknia*, or sacrificer, washes the
bones three times and then places them in an earthen
pot, tying up the mouth with a white cloth. Then, having
taken three pieces of the hard yolk of an egg, three loaves
of bread, the leg of the fowl, "*u'iar krad lynti*," and the
lower jaw-bones of the animals which have been sacrificed, he
places them inside the cairn and shuts the door. Eatables and
765 betel-nut are then placed on the top of the cairn. Early next
787 morning the relatives and friends go to the cairn with fresh
food and water, and look about for new foot-prints, the idea being
[775] that from these foot-prints they can foretell future events.
This they do until the third night after the cremation.

During these three nights the front door of the house formerly
occupied by the deceased is never closed, it being thought that
the spirit may wish to return and visit its earthly abode. The
whole family is moreover *sang*, or taboo, during this period, and
no manner of work can be done. When the three nights are
over, it is called the *lait ia*, i.e. the days (of mourning) are
passed, and three eggs are broken to ascertain what was the
cause of the death. After this the family goes to bathe, and
[783] the clothes and mats in the house are washed. When this has
been done, the taboo is removed and the family can go to
work. After a month a pig or a fowl is sacrificed, the ceremony
782 being called "*ai bam lait bnai*." It will be observed that three
765 seems to be the lucky number throughout these funeral
801 ceremonies. The number seems to bear a similar significance
in other matters of Khasi ritual, e.g. the pouring out of libations,
which is always done three times.

587 It is *sang* or taboo for a Khasi widow to re-marry within one
428 year from the death of her husband, there is a similar prohibi-
tion for a husband re-marrying; but such *sang* can be got over
by the payment of a fine to the clan of the deceased. After the
expiration of one year the fine is reduced in amount. Khasi
widows do not as a rule re-marry, according to U Jeebon Roy,

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the bones of males and females being kept in separate bundles 764 wrapped in white cloth, two women of the clan reverently carrying them in their arms, holding the bundles of bones to their breasts. One female carries the bones of the males and the other those of the females. In front of these women walks an old man who scatters along the way leaves of the *dieng-shit* tree and grains of rice, and when it is necessary to cross any stream or river, he ties a thread from one side of the bank to the other, this is for the spirit of the departed to cross the water. 764 782 [775] Sometimes *u'nam tohrih*, a kind of long grass, is used instead of thread for the above purpose. On arrival at the clan puja-house, the bones of the males are laid on one bed and those of the females on another, the beds being bedecked with rich hangings. A cock, *u'iar kradlynti* (lit.: "the cock which scratches the way"), is sacrificed, this sacrifice being considered by the Khasis to be of peculiar significance. A pig, a cock, and a bull are then sacrificed, and portions of the above are offered to the spirits of the deceased. These offerings are known by the name of *ai-bam*, and are placed in a basket which is hung up in the house, together with the left thigh of the fowl and the lower jaw-bone of the bullock. A dance is performed that night, first 535 in the house by two women, one belonging to the clan and the other an outsider, and afterwards in a specially prepared place outside the house called "*lympung*." The *sharati*, or flute, which is played at funerals is sounded, drums are beaten, and bombs are exploded. This dancing lasts from one to nine days, the limit being always an uneven number of days. At Cherra two effigies called *Ka Puron* and *U Tyngshop* are prepared and dressed up; the former is intended to represent *Ka Iawbei*, the first ancestress, and the other *U Suidnia*, the first maternal uncle of the clan. These effigies are held in the hands of the dancers. In the meantime two lines of upright stones consisting of three each, with a table stone in front of each line, have been set up. These are called *markjat* or *marlynti*, and are intended to serve as resting-places for the spirits of the dead on their way to the tomb of the clan. 764 These stones are generally not more than three feet in height, and must not be confounded with the larger stones or *marbyinna*. On the night before it is proposed to deposit the

782 of the Khasi.

Just as the Khasi are unable to explain how man fell into sin, so they also cannot explain why the rooster appears as mediator between god and man. The Khasi tradition relates of the rooster: u khun ka blei uba kit ryndang ba shah ryndang na ka bynta jong nga u briu, i.e. he who, as son of the goddess, gives his life for man, thus expiating sin through sacrifice and reconciling god.

769
775 The Khasi believe in another world and their attention is directed towards the comfort of the spirits of the dead. One of the main tasks is to give them nourishment (ai bam), which must be done, since the welfare of the living depends on the welfare of the dead. For example, if one can no longer get the corpse of the deceased because it is in a foreign country or has been consumed by wild animals, one takes his clothes at the very least and carries out the burial ceremonies with these. For only such spirits, whose burial ceremonies were performed according to usage and custom, can participate in chewing betel nuts in the garden (in the house) of god, whereas the others must wander around on earth [409] or must continue living in insects, birds, and other animals. They do not believe in hell [276] (in the Christian sense). The greatest felicity for a Khasi is "to chew betel nuts perpetually." Therefore they conceive of heaven as the dwelling (garden or house) of god, in which only betel nuts are chewed: uba bam kwai ha iing u blei (he who chews betel nuts in the house of god).

[776] This cult of spirits, which relates to deceased relatives, is mixed with the ancestor cult. Thus the first great-grandmother of each sib (jaid) becomes a goddess (ka jaubei) and the first great-grandfather of the sib a god (u thaulang).

776
[753] is calling. He is, however, lame; but whoever answers the call or screams is lost, since he will be seized by the 'suid tynjang and tickled to death.

[763] If one wishes to protect oneself from a violent death, one must propitiate the demoness ka tyrut by sacrifice, because she is the original cause of this method of dying. The Khasi have a great respect for violent death as it increases the difficulties of the prescribed ceremonies of burial, even making them impossible, which would in turn deny the spirit of the departed one peace in eternity.

• [775] They also live in fear of the devil u 'suid-lam-iap (the messenger of god, i.e., the executor of his commands). He leads the souls of people away into another kingdom. He is supposed to be horrible; of gigantic size, he walks around with long trailing hair seeking his victim. His teeth are as large as a ka wait (a hatchet or an axe).

[842] [413] The women are especially afraid of a devil whom they call u 'suid-um (the water devil). He has the power of attacking women and causing sterility in them, and if they are pregnant causing a miscarriage.

776
753 The demoness ka khlan brings cholera and the demoness ka tihar brings severe colic.

They believe that they get malaria through the influence of the demoness ka rih, while in the region of Theriaghat the fever is ascribed to the demoness ka duba.

Smallpox, which is otherwise feared everywhere, is considered by the Khasi to be evidence of the favor of the god u siem niang thylliew. If there is someone in one of the huts sick with smallpox, the sick person is not only not avoided, but even healthy children are brought there, so that they may receive the "kiss of the god," i.e., that they may also get smallpox.

764 which is called u 'lang sait kaid or "the
782 he-goat which washes off the devil." The mean-
ing of this is: the he-goat is similar to the
"scapegoat" which takes the sins of the de-
ceased upon himself.

Among the poor (that is among those who
only use uncut wood as well as those who use
wood cut with the ka wait) there is no funeral.

Now the closest relatives start the fire
and after these the children of the deceased,
if there are any present, apply fire. The
cloth on the upper end of the bamboo poles
flame brightly and is burned up in no time.
The few clothes of the deceased are also soon
in flames and then the actual burning of the
body begins.

If the pile of wood catches fire, a rooster
u 'iar padat is sacrificed immediately. This
rooster is swung three times over the funeral
pyre just as one swings incense and its blood
is smeared three times on the pyre. Then the
"stomach egg" (leng kpoh) is broken at the
head end of the funeral pyre. Then three ar-
[823] rows ('nam tymen) [433] are thrown by hand
as far as one can in three directions. One to
the east, one to the south, and the third to
[775] the north. But never to the west. Because
according to the belief of the Khasi the west
leads to the unending, thither go the souls of
the dead, there lies eternity. (30)

[626] 30. When the Khasi would like to have
somebody go far away and they
curse him, they speak as follows:
to leit sha ban sep ka ngi shaba
mih u bnai, i.e., go away where
the sun sets and the moon rises!

(Go away where the pepper grows.)

Monuments of the Khāsi Hill Tribes.

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intimately connected with cremation, and that bangles and 764 other ornaments are to be found in them. Whether such are removed from the body at the present day is a point I did not satisfactorily clear up, but which is one of interest.

You find the cromlech cuboidal form of four well-cut large stones on edge, closely fitted and surmounted by another horizontal one closing the structure. I give a drawing of a very large and striking one not far from the mission houses at Cherra; one of the sides of this has fallen and been removed, it is probably of great age, and the family is extinct. In other cases a number of rough stones are set up in a circle, crowned by a flat circular slab. I have also seen them of octagonal form, the sketch represents one in the south of Jawai, near the site of a deserted village, one of the side stones has fallen outwards, thus exposing the interior; in this I found several calcined bones and two bangles or wristlets of brass; this surprised me, for I was not aware that ornaments were left on the body on cremation; nor do I think they are at the present day. There were no traces of pottery either, and the bones had not been placed in a vessel as is the usual custom now. The structure was apparently of considerable age, and no village had occupied the site for many years.

A very general form at present of these bone receptacles is that of a heavy slab of stone, level with the ground, covering a cyst, which is lined with stones.

The bones are not consigned to these receptacles for some time, often a year or more after the burning of the body, and in no case until it has been ascertained that the soul of the deceased is at rest, and leading a life, or rather a new existence of happiness; should the whole of his family remain in health, this state is assumed to be attained, if, on the contrary, any member be afflicted with illness or pain, the spirit is understood to be restless and in want of something; the breaking of eggs is resorted to, and such may indicate that it is necessary to sacrifice a fowl or goats, and that the bones of the defunct be taken up and buried in another spot. Such removal, however, in the case of the most troublesome ghost is only done three times, and restless as he may be, the bones are then finally deposited in the family bone receptacle; man and wife are never deposited together; they belong to different clans, thus the ashes of children are placed in the receptacle of their mother's tribe to which they are considered to belong. I would here refer to the paper written by [113] the Rev. J. Pryse in the *Calcutta Review* for 1854, p. 128, with his excellent description of a form of sacrifice. (Appendix B.) $\frac{1}{2}$

The collection of the bones into one vault, as it may be termed, 764
is done under the impression that the souls of the departed may 775
 $\frac{1}{2}$ [see category 116, pp. 137-8. - Analyst]

764 all mingle together again in one large family without trouble or
 775 suffering. The idea of a member of a family being a wanderer
 in the other world, cut off from, and unable to join the circle of
 the spirits of his own clan, is most repugnant to the feelings of
 a Khasi or Sinteng. Thus we find every attempt is made on
 the death of a man in a distant village or district to lead his
 spirit back with his calcined bones to his native place. For in-
 stance, should he die alone on a trading expedition into North
 Cachar and be buried by a tribe of some other denomination,
 some relation, if he can afford it, will proceed to disinter and burn
 the remains; such will be done years after when accident may
 take some relative near the place. Of this I had an interesting
 example in my own camp when marching from the Khasi Hills
 to Asalu. • While encamped at Phagang in North Cachar

one of my coolies (porters) came one morning and asked leave for
 the day for himself and some of his fellows; on asking why
 they wanted it at such an unusual time, when we were in the
 field and moving camp, he said that a relation had died in that
 village while on a trading speculation with dried fish and salt
 towards Asalu from Jawai. It appeared that the man, having
 got an attack of fever, had been left behind by his companions,
 in the hope that he would get round in a few days and then
 follow them; he, however, eventually died, and was buried by
 the Kükis of "Kabir." My men had with some difficulty dis-
 covered the grave (for many years had elapsed), the site of Kabir
 had been changed in the interim, as is the custom of the Kükis,
 who seldom remain more than four years tilling the same
 ground, frequently not more than three, known in that part of
 India as "Joom cultivation"; high grass covered the old village
 site; the Khasia coolies, however, disinterred the remains, burnt
 them, and the residue was carefully preserved and sent back to
 Jawai, the man's native place, to be interred with the bones of
 his family.

When carrying the remains to the home of the deceased,
 not only is the greatest care bestowed on them, but the spirit is
 carefully considered and led onward, to prevent the possibility,
 as they suppose, of its wandering off the route. Leaves are oc-
 casionally plucked, and with three or four grains of rice placed
 on them, are deposited by the wayside as offerings. On reaching
 [782] a river this is done on the bank, and sometimes when such a
 river is large and the abode of some powerful demon, a fowl is
 let loose in the jungle as an offering to the titular spirit of the
 stream. A most curious custom exists connected with this
 transporting of the soul which I have seen on several occasions.
 The dead, they say, have not the strength or ability to wade

* In Crawford's embassy to Siam, we find that a similar idea prevails in
 that country (see Appendix C).

Movements of the Khadi Hill Tribes.

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through water, and if they trust themselves to it would be carried down the stream, never to be recovered. They, therefore, stretch a thread of cotton from one bank to the other, and if the breadth is great this is kept clear of the water by sticks planted in the bed of the river, and notched at the top to receive it. If the running water should be very narrow merely a stick is laid, or even a stalk of grass is considered sufficient to form a bridge for the dead man's soul. The line of thread is called the "string bridge."

On passing through some dense dark wood where it is presumed a demon may be, they think it not impossible that he may be detaining them or throwing impediments in the way, and should any of the party fall sick such is to them clearly indicated. The breaking of eggs is resorted to, or a pendulum is made by tying a stone, knife, or generally the bones but in which they keep the lime that is mixed with the betel and pan leaves, and the similarity of the Bodo or Mech custom shows how general these superstitious customs are among the tribes in this quarter. The only difference being that with the Khadi, the weight is caused to revolve in a circle should any spirit require to be propitiated, and that it should cease to revolve when the offering, either a fowl or a pig, is considered to have been accepted.

Should a Khadia lose his life in such a way that his body cannot be recovered, say by being drowned in one of the large rivers in the plains, his relations assemble on some prominent hill or rock overlooking the low country. One of the members taking some cowries (small shells used as money, Cypraea) in his hand, and looking towards the site of the accident, shouts out the name of the deceased and calls on him to return; his spirit having been supposed to do so, they proceed to burn the cowries, which are symbolical of his bones, and any clothes of the deceased they may possess. The ashes of the cowries are then placed in the bone depository.

The corpse is kept in the house four or five days, occasionally longer. In the case of chiefs of tribes, men of consequence and wealth, the body after death is preserved in honey, and kept in this way in its coffin for a very considerable period; the platform on which the body is burnt is erected during the time, and considerable expense is entailed on its construction, in cutting the stones, as well as on the expenditure of gunpowder; throughout the day explosions may be heard at irregular intervals from different quarters, now at one side, then at another to drive away

* The cremative and sometimes eatable of the Khadi Hills is not the reason why the dead are preserved in honey; it would be impossible to preserve it in sufficient quantity for such a purpose. Vide H. Selkirk's paper in the "Asiatic", where this is stated.

God or Goddess, deities regarded as helpful in bringing prosperity, producing fertility, and so on. Rituals of this kind are no longer practiced, except for the Swingkhlan ceremony designed to protect the joint village of Jorai. Finally, the state religion of many chieftains was expressed in one great ceremony per year which was intended to secure ancestral blessing for a chief and his lineage, and, through this, for the entire chieftain. The notable example, still practiced, is the Pongkhing System of Khasi chieftains. [Cf. Longfild 1937, 1940, Stenard 1954b, Becker 1958] *Shame and medicine*. In time of illness, a Khasi calls in a sorcerer, and possibly also a medicine man. The medicine man is an ordinary individual who has hit upon some herbal remedy for one or more ailments, who has become famous enough to be sought out and rewarded in cash, and who jealously guards the formula of his medicine until it dies with him. He and his patients tend to regard him as especially blessed, final, death, and *eternity*. The universe is comprised of a heaven, the earth, and the air between. Heaven is where the souls of deceased mortals live in eternal peace, grouped *sh* by *sh*. The earth and all nature were created by God, and everything that God created has its own individual soul. There is no other great earth deity, for it was God who created the earth. The air is inhabited by the wandering souls of those dead for whom full death rites were not performed. A Khasi's potentiality for enjoying an afterlife in heaven with his ancestors depends on his receiving proper death rites at the hands of his *sh* mates. First, his body is cremated by his children, notably his youngest daughter, and his bones are collected and deposited temporarily in a small stone receptacle. All work stops in the village while everyone participates in the funeral. Once every several years, an entire *sh* gathers to witness the transfer of the bones of recently deceased *sh* mates from their temporary receptacles to the great *sh* cairn that is in the keeping of the youngest daughter, descended from the *sh* ancestors through a line of youngest daughters. This final ceremony covers five days, and is elaborate and expensive, but when an individual's bones are finally resting with those of his antecedents in the cairn, it is understood that his soul is finally in heaven, "sitting betel nut in the house of God."

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178[113]
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(972)764
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218 ACCOUNT OF KHASI AND JAINTEA HILLS

593 wadlock goes to the wife and becomes her property; but all other
 428 property is inalienable, and reverts to his family, as also does his
 corpse after death.

771 'RELIGION.—The religion of the Khasis is demon-worship, or
 a jumble of enchantments muttered by priests who are sorcerers.
 They invoke evil spirits as the deputies of God and the instruments
 of His pleasure or displeasure. The Khasis believe in metem-

• 775 psychosis, or the transmigration of souls. After death, human beings
 are transformed into monkeys, crabs, tortoises, frogs, etc. Though
 a future state is not denied, it is treated with absolute indifference,
 as beyond the sphere of responsibility; all rites, ceremonies, and
 observances bear reference to the welfare of mankind in this world.

The spirits of their departed relatives and ancestors are invoked
 only in so far as they are considered to influence and have power
 764 over the present life. The Khasis burn their dead, and collect the
 ashes into urns, which are kept under a slab raised on four others
 enclosing a space. These monuments are of various kinds and sizes

614 —one for individuals, another for a family, and another for a whole
 clan. There is no caste system, but each clan is called after some
 object of nature, as the Oak clan, the Crab clan, etc., and these
 names entail certain restrictions beyond which intermarriage is
 771 forbidden. The Khasi religion may be briefly described as the
 practice of charms to cure diseases, and to avert misfortunes of all
 kinds, by means of ascertaining the name of the demon who is the
 author of the evil, and the kind of sacrifice necessary to appease it.

797 'CHRISTIANITY.—The Welsh Mission has been labouring
 amongst the Khasis and Syntengs for thirty-two years. The
 Christians number about 1000 [according to the Census of 1872,
 the total number of native converts in the District is only 85].
 There are four central stations—Cherrí, Sheld, Shillong, and Jowí
 —and twenty-three churches. Translations of the whole of the
 New Testament, and a portion of the Old, are now (1876) going
 to press, besides other religious books.

197 'LANGUAGE.—The definitions generally given of monosyllabic
 languages are far from adequate to enable us to assign to the
 193 Khasi tongue its position amongst the Indo-Chinese family of
 speech. Still, in the absence of a better terminology, it may
 be described as monosyllabic in the agglutinative stage. The
 monosyllabic element greatly predominates. By far the larger
 number of the compounds are mere agglutinations (in a modified